Philippine Values II:
Social Acceptance

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IN our saner moments, we humans accept the fact that we are different from one another. And in our leisure moments many of us enjoy getting a closer look at these differences, either first hand through travel, or second hand through reading and conversation. Yet for all that, and with all the good will in the world, we remain incipient Professor Higginses, for whom all the world is Eliza Doolittle: unconsciously perhaps but nonetheless intently, we are out to remake the world to our image, and if tolerance keeps our creative urge in check today and tomorrow, we know that come next week we may be more critical and exacting than ever.

What is this urge that lies within us, this tendency to censure and correct, to rate and score, to prune, crop, trim, and transplant? It is the expression of a basic and essentially human faculty, that of *evaluation*. It is a sign that we are human, for only humans make this critical response to their environment.[1] This intelligent reaction involves the recognition

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[1] John E. Smith, VALUE CONVICTIONS AND HIGHER EDUCATION (New Haven: Hazen Foundation, 1958), p. 8.

of a fundamental contrast between good and evil, truth and falsity. It involves as well the presence and operation of standards or criteria of judgment. Finally, if the judgment is to be relevant, it supposes a knowledge of the peculiar circumstances in which the evaluation must be made.

Thus if I see a man strike a child with some vehemence, it is likely that as a human being I will pass some judgment, however kind and charitable, on the action. For I am convinced that actions such as these may be good or bad, and that there is a great difference between the two; further, I believe that there are some conditions under which it is good and others under which it is bad for a man to strike a child so; finally—not knowing the circumstances of the particular case—I may presume that the man has some good reason for this violence (because he is the father, perhaps, and the child is being corrected for an action which might otherwise endanger its life, or—if I am a stranger to their culture—for some reason I do not yet understand). But in any event as a human I am instinctively concerned, critical, and responsive. And the measure of my response will be the system of values which I hold dear, values which are a part of my culture, part and parcel of the way of life that I have learned.

The various meanings given to the term "value" can be illustrated in a specific instance in which they are at work. The working student who is a houseboy by day and a collegian by night is motivated by any number of values, implicit or explicit, among them college education, social mobility, the possibility of self-improvement through education, the desirability of certain statuses and roles and the undesirability of others. All of these are values in the sense of *standards used in the making of a decision*—in this case, to work his way through college as a houseboy—but they are influences of different sorts. College education and social mobility are *aims* or goals toward which the young man strives. The possibility of improving one's lot through education is for him a belief, or *conviction*. The rating that he gives to his probable future status without a college degree, his temporary status as a houseboy, and the status he is likely to enjoy when he has won his

degree, proceeds from a *structural principle* by which statuses are distinct and unequal in prestige, and a *conviction* that the status of a college-degree holder is higher than that of one without such a diploma, and that the status of a houseboy is lower than either. Somehow these various principles, aims, and convictions are played off against one another, and the young man decides that the temporary status drop he suffers as a part-time houseboy will be more than compensated by the goal he is convinced he will attain. His total value system is his standard for decision, and his decision is to work his way through college.

Our concern here is with the value system found in the lowland Philippines, with the principles, aims, and convictions that seem to be at work in the behavior one observes in this society. One should not expect every value to be uniquely Filipino, because notable differences in value systems are caused not so much by differences in the individual values as by the differences in ranking and emphasis. The compounds H_2O and H_2O_2 contain the same elements, but water and hydrogen peroxide have quite different qualities, as many blondes can testify. To cite the analogy of Kluckhohn and Kelly, the musical notes A, B, and G are the same notes regardless of how they are played, but the total effect is quite modified by any change of order.[2] In similar fashion two value systems can have markedly different total casts, or slants, because of the peculiar way in which the individual values are weighted and combined in each system.

It follows, then, that when we speak of certain values as being characteristic of Philippine society, we do not mean that these conceptions of the desirable are found *only* in the Philippines. On the contrary, it will be seen that almost all the values explained in the pages that follow constitute elements in the value systems of other nations, including the United States. But the emphasis placed on pleasant interaction, for example, and the means taken to assure it, are quite noticeably different

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[2] Clyde Kluckhohn and William Kelly. "The Concept of Culture," in Ralph Linton, ed., THE SCIENCE OF MAN IN THE WORLD CRISIS (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945, pp. 78-106), p. 102.

in the two cultures. Thus, the American considers clear understanding of differences a desirable prelude to discussion, and he is at pains to identify the point at which cleavage begins between himself and his discussant. He achieves peace frequently by agreement to disagree. The Filipino is likely to seek the same interpersonal harmony by a blurring of the differences, and by agreement *not* to disagree—at least openly. The American rates integrity (defined as "let your speech express your mind exactly") higher than interpersonal tranquility, whereas the Filipino sees no reason why conflict should be courted when silence or evasive speech will preserve the peace.

How do we arrive at these values, what basis have we for saying that this or that is a value in a culture? The process involved is one of arguing back from what we observe, and what we observe will include what people do and say or do *not* do and say, the choices they make or refuse, and the things they punish and reward. To identify the more important values in a culture we can employ the fourfold test of Robin Williams, namely:

1. *Extensiveness* of the value in the total activity of the system. What proportion of a population and its activities manifest the value?

2. *Duration* of the value. Has it been persistently important over a considerable period of time?

3. *Intensity* with which the value is sought or maintained, as shown by: effort, crucial choices, verbal affirmation, and by reactions to threats to the value—for example, promptness, certainty, and severity of sanctions.

4. *Prestige of value carriers*—that is, of persons, objects, or organizations considered to be bearers of the value. Culture heroes, for example, are significant indexes of values of high generality and esteem.[3]

Sometimes at the overt, and always at least at the covert, level—down underneath as it were—there are values of an *extremely* basic nature. Such a value (which may be an aim, a

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[3] Robin M. Williams, Jr., AMERICAN SOCIETY (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), pp. 409-10.

principle, or a conviction) can be expressed as a proposition. Framed in this manner, it is "a postulate or position, declared or implied, and usually controlling behavior or stimulating activity, which is tacitly approved or openly promoted in a society."[4] Propositions of this sort, which Opler calls *themes*, conform to the definition of values given earlier, for they are norms or standards for decision and choice. Their influence may operate, however, below the level of awareness.

It is with a theme, a very basic and wide-ranging value, that we are concerned in this essay. Not with *all* themes, be it noted, but with one lowland Philippine theme that is more easily discovered and described.

Our purpose is *not* to pass judgment on this theme or its supporting values. It is rather less ambitious than that: first, to present an opinion regarding a wellspring of certain frequently observed patterns of Filipino behavior; second, and more important perhaps, to demonstrate a way of thinking about observed patterns of behavior which, though it may not give us *many* answers, will at least stop us from thinking we have *all* the answers.

We start with themes that express conditions of human existence considered not only attainable but highly desirable— the principal constituents of the Good Life here on earth. These aims, arranged in the order of descending importance (as I see it) are the following: (1) to be accepted by one's fellows for what one is, or thinks oneself to be, or would like to be, and be given the treatment due to one's station; (2) to be economically secure, at least to the extent of ordinarily being free of debt; (3) to move higher on the socioeconomic scale. Social acceptance, economic security, and social mobility—these are, in my opinion, three basic aims that motivate and control an immense amount of Filipino behavior. I shall here consider only the first and most important of these themes.

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[4] Morris Opler, "Some Recently Developed Concepts Relating to Culture," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 4 (1948): 120.

I have already suggested that social acceptance is enjoyed when one is taken by one's fellows for what he is, or believes he is, and is treated in accordance with his status. Put negatively—and this is perhaps the best way to express what I feel is the bare minimum of social acceptance for the Filipino— social acceptance is had when one is not rejected or improperly criticized by others. At the risk of undue and perhaps incorrect refinement of the concept, I distinguish social *acceptance* from social *approval* by the fact that the latter includes a positive expression of *liking* which does not seem essential to social acceptance among Filipinos. This is a point I would not argue, however, for I am fully aware that my distinction may be based less on the Filipino's failure to express this liking than my failure to observe it. It can be said without fear of contradiction, nonetheless, that a Filipino is satisfied with much more subtle expressions of acceptance than is the average American. A Tagalog proverb states, *Hindi baleng huwag mo akong mahalin; huwag mo lang akong hiyain;* that is, "It doesn't matter if you don't love me; just don't shame me."

The Filipino does enjoy overt signs of approval and liking, of course. Acceptance is especially sweet when it includes an outward manifestation of approval that makes clear to the individual that he is liked by those with whom he deals or— more important—by those to whom he is subject in one way or another. It is a great source of satisfaction for anyone to be given a pat on the back by his employer or teacher, and this seems clearly to be the case for Filipinos. Anyone who has stood before a class of Filipino students will easily recall the whoop of joy and relief that greets his smile of open approval, particularly if he has first feigned disappointment in class or individual performance. And as a matter of fact, in a society where (as my psychologist friends tell me) so much of one's happiness depends on the nods received from any number of authority figures, it is not surprising that assurance of social acceptance or approval should be sought after so avidly and appreciated so keenly.

To digress for a moment, is it possible that the pronounced tendency to seek and expect signs from God and the saints, as well as from environmental spirits, is sprung in part at least from the same other-directedness, the same authoritarian orientation? If one believes in the existence of an invisible world that is less than one step beyond the visible, and peopled principally by spirits who are normally neither for nor against one, but dangerously able to do no end of harm if aroused, it seems eminently logical to take all means possible to discover what these spirits want one to do. Moreover, that God and the saints *and* these other spirits should make their feelings known is not something extraordinary, since the ideal authority figure should do no less. Reports of apparitions, miracles, and signs are accepted by most Filipinos with a casual equanimity that amazes the individual (Filipino or non-Filipino) who was brought up in a more drab and less authoritarian manner.

At this point I am constrained to remind the reader that this essay develops one theme in a set of basic values held by *most* inhabitants of the lowland Philippines. The modal portrait should then, represent as faithfully as possible the 80 per cent who live in rural settlements of 1,000 or less, and not necessarily the minority living in large urban centers. For there is, as might be expected, a difference in values between those lowland Filipinos who are urban, well-educated, and economically secure, and the bulk of the population which is our primary consideration.[5] It is unfortunate that those most likely to be reading this paper are those least likely to be accurately portrayed. My apologies.

Returning to the discussion of the prime theme—the goal of social acceptance—let me clarify the fact that this happy state is not often conceived of in explicit terms and deliberate-

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[5] This rural-urban difference is often leveled, however, by an urban institution which is deserving of more than casual study: the placing of early child care almost completely in the hands of poorly educated maids reared in, or recently arrived from, the provinces. Beliefs in witches, ghosts, and the like may persist in the most externally sophisticated households, if each new arrival is indoctrinated by relatively ignorant and credulous household help.

ly pursued as such. The average Filipino does not say to himself, "Above all else, I want to be socially acceptable to the co-members of my groups." The desirability of social acceptance is for the modal Filipino an *implied* postulate, but a cultural theme nonetheless. Clearly recognized as important and satisfying goals, however, are two intermediate values which assist in the attainment of acceptance: smoothness of interpersonal relations, on the one hand, and shame and self-esteem (often called *amor propio*), on the other.

Smooth interpersonal relations. For the American newly arrived in the Philippines, the most striking quality manifested by Filipinos is their pleasantness, and among Filipinos getting their first full taste of American ways, a recurrent complaint is that Americans are often "brutally frank." These reactions are traceable to a clear intercultural difference, for smoothness of interpersonal relations (or SIR), while valued in both societies, is considered relatively more important by Filipinos than by Americans. After expanding somewhat on the meaning of SIR, and common ways of achieving it, I will propose an explanation for this difference.

SIR may be defined as a facility at getting along with others in such a way as to avoid outward signs of conflict: glum or sour looks, harsh words, open disagreement, or physical violence. It connotes the smile, the friendly lift of the eyebrow, the pat on the back, the squeeze of the arm, the word of praise or friendly concern. It means being agreeable, even under difficult circumstances, and of keeping quiet or out of sight when discretion passes the word. It means a sensitivity to what other people feel at any given moment, and a willingness and ability to change tack (if not direction) to catch the lightest favoring breeze.

SIR is acquired and preserved principally by three means; namely, *pakikisama*, euphemism, and the use of a go-between. I will consider each in turn.

Pakikisama is a Tagalog word derived from the root *sama*, "accompany, go along with." At times the word pakikisama is used as synonymous with what I understand by SIR; when so

employed, the word is very frequently (almost predictably) translated as "good public relations." But I believe the term pakikisama is more commonly used with a meaning narrower than SIR. In this more restricted sense it means "giving in," "following the lead or suggestion of another"; in a word, *concession*. It refers especially to the lauded practice of yielding to the will of the leader or majority so as to make the group decision unanimous. No one likes a hold-out.

This quality of pakikisama plays hob with public opinion surveys in the Philippines, and makes the experienced observer apt to ask many probing questions about the survey methods used. Certainly a public opinion poll in this society is unlikely to be the voice of the people that Lundberg thinks it might be elsewhere.[6] Too often the survey reflects what the poll-takers think or, to put it more accurately, what the respondents *thought* the pollsters were thinking.

A large local manufacturing company recently made a poll of their outlets to discover from the retailers what the customers thought of their products. The results were most gratifying— but they did not tally with what the boys in sales had to say. A little investigation showed that most retailers had not answered the pollsters without first knowing what company they were working for. A second survey, in which the pollsters identified themselves as from a rival company, brought the same overwhelming results—in favor of the *rival*.

In April 1961, to impress a class of Filipino and American students with the operation of pakikisama in the interview, I asked each of them to interview a number of Americans and Filipinos, clearly expressing an opinion contrary to the culturally expected position of the interviewee. They were then to ask the respondent what *he* thought about the question, namely, the advisability of using a go-between to adjust interpersonal hard feeling. The results of the 326 interviews indicate a highly significant association between being a Filipino and going along

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6 George A. Lundberg, "The Transition to Science in Human Relations," in Edgar A. Schuler *et al.*, READINGS IN SOCIOLOGY, 2nd edition (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1960), pp. 6-12.

with the opinion of the interviewer, even where that opinion is contrary to the position one would expect the Filipino to take— in this case, that a go-between is advisable. Americans, on the other hand, *resist* the suggestion of the interviewer that a go-between is advisable. Granted that the design of this student exercise is not a tight one, still I know of no one familiar with American and Filipino ways who would question the existence of the intercultural difference illustrated by the interview results.

Aside from going along with the other fellow, there are several additional common ways of achieving smooth interpersonal relations. One of these is *euphemism*, which is the stating of an unpleasant truth, opinion, or request as pleasantly as possible. It is an art that has long been highly prized in Philippine society, and is no less highly regarded today. Harsh and insulting speech is correspondingly devalued.

In 1604 Chirino noted of the Filipinos that "in courteous dealings, they are very consummate; in writing, they use many long and delicate refinements and niceties of language."[7] Loarca tells us as early as 1582 that taking vengeance for an insult received was a very common practice, and further adds that there was a law that "anyone who spoke disrespectfully of a chief, or uttered abusive language to him, was liable to death."[8] Plasencia, writing in 1589, says that insulting words caused great anger among the Kapampangan, and if two such quarreling parties refused to pay the fines levied for this kind of behavior, they were expected to try to outdo each other in giving a public feast, the one who spent most to be considered "the more powerful and honorable."[9] Juan Delgado wrote in 1754

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[7] Teodoro M. Kalaw, *Five Preceptives from Our Ancient Morality* (Manila: n.p., 1951), p. 50.

[8] Miguel de Loarca, RELACION DE LAS YSLAS FILIPINAS, 1582. Edition consulted here is that of Blair and Robertson, THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, 1493-1898, Vol. 5 (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1903), pp. 127, 181.

[9] Juan de Plasencia, O.S.F., CUSTOMS OF THE PAMPANGAS IN THEIR LAWSUITS, 1589. Edition consulted here is that of Blair and Robertson, THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, 1493-1898, Vol.16 (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904), pp. 326-27.

that the Filipino would rather suffer 100 lashes than a single harsh word,[10] an opinion echoed in Jose Rizal's footnote to Morga (1609): "The Filipino today prefers a beating to scolding or insults."[11]

Dr. Encarnacion Alzona expresses this commonly held value when she writes:

The use of courteous language is an ancient attribute of our people. Bluntness or brusqueness of speech is frowned upon, being regarded as a sign of ill-breeding. Thus, we give the erroneous impression to foreigners, who do not understand our concept of good manners, of being prolix or circumlocutory. As a matter of fact, it is the respectful and polite way of introducing a serious subject which is the real object of the call or conversation. A low voice and gentle manner must accompany the courteous speech, following the saying in Tagalog that

Ang marahang pangungusap   (A gentle manner of speaking
  Sa puso'y makalulunas.   soothes the heart.)

Ang salitang matatamis   (Sweet words win the heart
  Sa puso'y nakaaakit,   and dispel anger.)
Nagpapalubog ng galit.

Speaking in a harsh tone has been the cause of altercations, as the sensitive Filipino interprets it as an expression of ill-feeling. Even menial workers resent it, and the wise employer guards the tone of his voice in speaking to them, if he wants to preserve harmony and good feeling between management and labor.[12]

The use of euphemism is notable in a public or semi-public gathering where there is need to express an opinion on the topic under discussion. Except where the group is one whose members have learned to see the occasion (an academic conference, or seminar, for instance, or a meeting of openly op-

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[10] Juan J. Delgado, S.J., HISTORIA GENERAL SACRO-PROFANA, POLITICA Y NATURAL DE LAS ISLAS DEL PONIENTE LLAMADAS FILIPINAS, 1754. Edition consulted here is that of the Biblioteca Historica Filipina (Manila: Imp. de El Eco de Filipinas de D. Juan Atayde, 1892).

[11] Antonio de Morga, SUCESOS DE LAS ISLAS FILIPINAS, 1609. Edition consulted here is that of Blair and Robertson, THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, 1493-1898, Vol. 16 (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904), pp. 128-29.

[12] Encarnacion Alzona, "Ideals of the Filipinos," in Delfin Fl. Batacan, LOOKING AT OURSELVES (Manila: Philaw Publishing, 1956, pp. 262-283), pp. 263-264.

posed factions) as one in which straightforwardness is acceptable and desirable, the participants may appear never to dispute the point at issue, or to find an issue to dispute. So it will appear to the average American, at least. The preference for social process (SIR) over social product (conference results and conclusions) is understandable in a system where the highest value is placed on the pleasant word except when the exchange is between good friends or sworn enemies. Under these circumstances, however, one may hear forthright speech that is exceedingly direct, even by American standards.

In the analysis of natural Tagalog dialogues, my colleagues of the Institute of Philippine Culture joined me in identifying certain very common euphemistic devices at both the lexical and rhetorical levels. We found, for instance, that *siguro nga* ("I guess so" or "Could be") was a common refuge taken when one could not really agree with his conversation partner: weak agreement in lieu of disagreement. Self-depreciation was another frequently occurring way of smoothing a situation in which envy and hard feeling might arise.

On the more complex level of the sequence of the whole dialogue, we noted that there was a pattern discernible where a request, correction, or complaint was involved. The conversation opened with a "feeler," to discover whether or not the other party were busy or, more important, receptive. There followed an introduction of the matter at hand, then the request or correction was given. Especially if a correction had been given, there would follow an integration—a friendly inquiry for the health of the family, or about some personal concern of the individual just corrected. The blow of the correction was softened by the assurance that the basic relation of alliance and loyalty had not been disturbed by the correction (which, more often than not, was blamed on pressure from "higher up").

The use of a *go-between* is another common means of preserving or restoring smooth interpersonal relations. This also has a long history in the Philippines and even today enters into many facets of daily living. Here it is not agreement, oblique

speech, or remedial friendliness, but a third party who is used to assuage a bruise, heal a wound, or prevent injury.

The go-between is used *preventively* in a number of common situations: the embarrassing request, complaint, or decision is often communicated through a middle-man, to avoid the shame (*hiya*) of a face-to-face encounter. For the American who feels bad that a Filipino acquaintance, for instance, has shown so little trust in his kindness as to send a third party with a request, I should add that this behavior is not necessarily prompted by a lack of confidence in the person so approached. It is often done as much for the one approached as for the one who sends the middle-man. It is so much easier to explain matters to one not directly involved, especially when you know that the go-between will do a much better job than yourself in breaking the news—should it be disappointing.

The traditional marriage negotiations are conducted through go-betweens and spokesmen for the two parties, the parties being not so much the prospective bride and groom as their families and kinsmen. This custom is reported by the earliest writers on the Philippines, and is in evidence today in all but the most non-traditional centers.[13]

Go-betweens are utilized not only to avoid possible embarrassment or bad feeling, but also to *remedy* an existing state of conflict or tension. We are familiar with extended negotiations that have been carried on through various third parties in an effort to reconcile major political figures in the Philippines. The same sort of activity is going on more quietly and less spectacularly in almost every town in the nation, the object in view being reconciliation for political, social, or personal reasons. And it has been going on that way for all of Philippine history. Loarca, for example, stated in 1582 that the people of Panay had no judges "although there are mediators who go from one party to another to bring about a reconciliation."[14]

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[13] Frank Lynch, S.J., "Marriage," in *Area Handbook on the Philippines* (Chicago: Human Relations Area Files, Inc., 1956), pp. 653-58; and Generoso F. Rivera and Robert T. McMillan, THE RURAL PHILIPPINES (Manila: United States Mutual Security Agency, 1952), p. 123. 123.

[14] Loarca, *op. cit.,* p. 141.

In family disputes, the same pattern obtains. Frequently, a relative who is not involved in the difficulty becomes the middle-man for two fellow-kinsmen who are not on speaking terms with each other. This is considered his duty, provided he has the other qualities that make him desirable as a go-between: smooth speech and wit above all.

From what has been presented so far, it will be clear, I trust, that smoothness of interpersonal relations, attained through concession, euphemism, the use of a mediator, and other means, is highly and traditionally valued in Philippine society, and found at work in almost all human encounters. That this harmony of interaction should be relatively more important in the Philippines than in the United States is traceable, I believe, to the differential emphasis on individual responsibility and group solidarity in the two societies.

Traditionally, the American adult attains security through independence—standing on his own feet, fighting his own battles, making his own way in the world. In actual fact, this Horatio Alger character is often quite dependent on the assistance of others, but the ideal, inculcated in early child training, is that of the independent, achievement-oriented striver. So effective is the childhood training that in later life, when hard reality has made appeal to kinsmen a necessity at least occasionally, there remains the feeling that it is not a good thing. Illustrative of this ambivalence is the report of Cumming and Schneider on intensive interviews with 15 American adults between the ages of 50 and 80.

We found some reluctance among our respondents to discuss instrumental activities or mutual aid and an eagerness to discuss socio-emotional and ritual activities. In all 15 cases, initial questioning about aid among kinsmen elicited the belief that borrowing and lending among kindred was a mistake. Further questioning, however, revealed that such mutual aid had, in fact, taken place recently among 6 of the 15. Even exchange of service is discussed reluctantly. Kinship appears to include friendliness, rites of passage, family reunions, and sociability, but ideally it does not include service or financial help, although this may, through bad fortune, be necessary.[15]

[15] Elaine Cumming and David M. Schneider, "Sibling Solidarity: A Property of American Kinship," *American Anthropologist*, 63 (June 1961): 501.

This fighting shy of dependence on kinsmen for assistance is expressed in other ways, among them the reluctance to seek the support of relatives in personal disputes with third parties. It is not expected that relatives should immediately take sides and rally around a kinsman who has had a disagreement or a fight with some outsider; settling the matter is *his* business. In effect, this means that among Americans a serious argument between two private citizens ordinarily involves only the principal pair. It also means that, since these flare-ups are contained by a cultural code of non-intervention, there is ordinarily relatively little danger of tension and conflict spreading beyond the two individuals with whom it started. Consequently, there need not be any particular emphasis on behavior that would make the likelihood of these disputes a remote one.

The situation is quite different in Philippine society, for the average Filipino considers it good, right, and just that he should go to his relatives in material need, and that he should seek them out as allies in his disagreements with outsiders. Security is sought not by *in*dependence so much as by *inter*dependence.

Correlated with this interdependence is the group's acceptance of responsibility for the actions of the individual member. Although relatives may regret very much that matters have come to such a pass, and may reserve to a later date their own punishment of a trouble-making kinsman, they will ordinarily back him up in a dispute. The opposing principal will bring his own group into the fray, the resulting conflict being one which—especially in a small community—can cause considerable and possibly long-lasting damage to the social, political, and economic life of the residents. In other words, when two Filipinos have a serious fight, there is much more at stake than when two Americans break off relations. This fact is, in my opinion, one reason why smooth interpersonal relations are more highly cultivated in the Philippines than in the United States.

Shame and self-esteem. I should like to restate the relation between smooth interpersonal relations, which are an intermediate goal, and social acceptance, which is a thematic, or ultimate, goal. By being agreeable with others, even under try-

ing circumstances, the Filipino grants a measure of social acceptance to those he deals with, and in the very display of courtesy himself gains or enhances his acceptance as a good member of society. Hence the reward of social acceptance is itself held out to encourage the granting of it to others.

Contrary behavior is sanctioned in two ways. First, there is the general and universal social sanction of shame, or *hiya*. The fuller meaning of this term can be illustrated by a series of connected examples.

The employee who would like to borrow some money from his employer may hesitate to approach him because "I am ashamed" (*nahihiya ako*). Again, he may view the action as socially acceptable but, on making his request, be refused in a discourteous manner. In this event he might later say of himself, "I was ashamed" (*nahiya ako*), and of his employer, "He shamed me," or "He put me to shame" (*hiniya niya ako*). If, while he was asking for the loan, a fellow employee innocently entered the office and joined them, the worker might break off his request and leave at the first opportunity, explaining later that he did so because "I felt ashamed," or "I was made to feel ashamed" (*napahiya ako*). A study of these episodes indicates that the generic meaning of hiya is *the uncomfortable feeling that accompanies awareness of being in a socially unacceptable position, or performing a socially unacceptable action.* Hiya is *shame,* but the feeling is aroused in various ways.

In the first episode, the employee has the feeling by *anticipation*: projecting himself into the position of asking his employer for a loan, he is aware of being in a socially undesirable role. The concomitant uncomfortable reaction inhibits further action. One who has flagrantly violated socially approved norms of conduct, yet is known or presumed to have had this antecedent awareness, merits condemnation as "shameless," or *walang hiya*: he did not possess that restraining feeling of shame that should have accompanied his social awareness.

In the second instance described above, the employee judged it socially safe to approach his employer, but was rebuffed. Here it was someone else who deliberately made the

employee feel out of place, generating in him an awareness of his socially unacceptable position or action and the feeling of shame that accompanies this awareness. In the final case, the element of voluntariness is missing, for it was the situation created by the unexpected entrance of a co-worker, rather than anyone's deliberate intent, that made the employee feel out of place and withdraw from the scene.

Hiya is a universal social sanction in lowland Philippine society, for it enforces conformity with all aspects of the social code, whether the end in view is acceptance by society in general or by the individual with whom one is dealing at the moment. There is, however, a second sanction, more limited in scope, a special defense against severe interpersonal unpleasantness. I refer to *amor propio*, or self-esteem, which is manifested in sensitivity to personal affront.

This sensitivity is not, like smooth interpersonal relations, for the attainment and enhancement of social acceptance; it serves rather to *retain* the acceptance one already has. It is an emotional high-tension wire that girds the individual's dearest self, protecting from disparagement or question the qualities he most jealously guards as his own best claim to others' respect and esteem.

Amor propio, in other words, is not aroused by *every* insult, slighting remark, or offensive gesture. The stimuli that set it off are only those that strike at the individual's most highly valued attributes. Some examples may clarify this distinction.

To judge from the failure of the joint BPS-PACD functional literacy project, the average Filipino farmer is not greatly concerned over his ability or inability to read and write. Chided for his illiteracy, his reaction is apathetic; he is, at most, shamed or humiliated by the disparaging comment. His reaction lacks the high emotional charge generated by injured self-esteem.

But if he is accused of being an improvident father, or the husband of a faithless spouse, core values and attributes have been questioned and the reaction is liable to be violent.

The Tagalog scholar who is quite willing to accept corrections for his lapses into poor English may be incensed by any questioning (even legitimate and justified) of his Tagalog. It has been my observation that participants in round-table discussions and seminars are extremely alert to indications of emotional involvement and will deliberately avoid pressing a question if the respondent seems too committed to his position. Where there is emotional involvement, there is amor propio, and to prick amor propio is to ask for trouble.

Social acceptance is gained and enhanced by smooth interpersonal relations; its loss is guarded against by two sanctions discouraging behavior disruptive of these relations. The first and general sanction is hiya, or shame; the second and specific safeguard is amor propio, or self-esteem. By these positive and negative means the lowland Filipino strives to have his fellows take him for a good man, an acceptable member of the community.